

leaden sky after the lurid splendour of Byron
had fallen
from it like a final meteor; but others of the
young, endowed with less vitality, felt weighed
beneath a load of
emotional, as well as political, reaction.
Minor writers,
like Maxime du Camp, bear out Musset's
description;
and though in England, so much less
touched by the war
and now at length victorious, we should not
expect the
same aftermath, it may be more than
coincidence that so
few writers are today remembered who
were not either
over twenty-five or under twelve—too old or
too young
to be vitally impressionable—when the year
1820 closed.
In prose, between Carlyle (born in 1795) and
Thackeray
(born in 1811) the only names of any note
are Macaulay
(who would have been hard to damp in any
age), Mill,
Newman, and George Borrow. Similarly
there is a gap
in the lineage of English poets between the
birth of Keats
in 1795 and that of Tennyson in 1809. Such
speculation
about literary vintage-years must remain
fanciful; yet
there is one poet born between Keats and
Tennyson who
was certainly cramped by a despondency like
Musset's,
due in part, no doubt, to his own
temperament, but
partly also, I believe, to his time. Thomas
Lovell Beddoes
came into the world in an evil hour for him,
on a July day
in 1803.

That the grandson of Richard Edgeworth

and son of
Dr. Beddoes should be eccentric, can
surprise nobody,
steading as it might well seem to have
Maria Edgeworth
for an aunt; but between him and his elders
there is one
great difference. He lacked, not their energy
—he could
drudge like an emmet at anatomy, then
throw down his
pen to take a vigorous part in revolutions
and conspira-
cies—but their unquestioning self-confidence.
To Richard
Edgeworth and Dr. Beddoes the world was
on the whole
a friendly sort of place, to be succeeded here
and hereafter